

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING." A consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential private, nonprofit agency that is designed and operated within a local community by people with disabilities and provides an array of independent living services, as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.).

"COMMISSION." The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

"DEPARTMENT." The Department of Labor and Industry of the Commonwealth.

"PERSONS WHO ARE BLIND." Any person who is legally blind or any person who is eligible to receive services from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

"PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY" or "PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES." A person certified by a licensed physician, audiologist, speech pathologist or a qualified State agency:

(1) As being deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, having a hearing loss or being speech impaired.

(2) As having a disability and who requires technology to independently access telecommunications services.

"PRINT MEDIA ACCESS SYSTEM." Any nationwide or Statewide telephone access service that provides access to national and local newspapers to persons who are blind.

"PRINT MEDIA ACCESS SYSTEM PROGRAM." The Print Media Access System Program established under section 3.1.

"TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICE." Equipment necessary for a person with a disability to engage in communication by wire or radio with another person with a disability or with a hearing individual.

"TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICE DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM." The Telecommunication Device Distribution Program established under section 3.

"TELECOMMUNICATION RELAY SERVICE." Telephone transmission services that provide the ability for a person with a disability to engage in communication by wire or radio with a hearing individual in a manner that is functionally equivalent to the ability of a person who does not have a disability to communicate using voice communication services by wire or radio. The term includes services that enable two-way communication between an individual who uses a telecommunication device or other nonvoice terminal device and an individual who does not use such a device.

HISTORY: Act 1995-34 (H.B. 961), § 2, approved July 6, 1995, eff. immediately; Act 2002-181 (H.B. 2424), § 1, approved Dec. 9, 2002, eff. in 60 days.; Act 2004-174 (S.B. 79), § 2, approved Nov. 29, 2004, eff. in 60 days.

PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES, ANNOTATED BY LEXISNEXIS(R)

*THIS DOCUMENT IS CURRENT THROUGH ACT 41 OF THE 2007 LEGISLATIVE
SESSION*

*** AUGUST 29, 2007 ANNOTATION SERVICE ***

PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES
TITLE 35. HEALTH AND SAFETY
CHAPTER 35A. UNIVERSAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PRINT MEDIA ACCESS
ACT

Go to the Pennsylvania Code Archive Directory

35 P.S. § 6701.3 (2007)

§ 6701.3. Establishment of Telecommunication Device Distribution Program

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.-- The Telecommunication Device Distribution Program is hereby established. It shall be a program whereby telecommunication devices for people with disabilities are distributed at no charge to the distributee.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.-- The executive director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the department, in cooperation with other State agencies which serve people with disabilities, shall oversee implementation of the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program. To this end, the executive director may do any of the following:

(1) Establish criteria of eligibility in accordance with subsection (c) and adopt regulations and forms consistent with the act of July 31, 1968 (P.L. 769, No. 240), referred to as the Commonwealth Documents Law.

(2) Facilitate coordination of funds required for the distribution system with selected centers for independent living or selected not-for-profit agencies having experience in serving persons with hearing or speech disabilities.

(3) Determine, in cooperation with other State agencies, the funds required for the distribution system and provide information to the commission as required under section 4.

(c) TO QUALIFY AS DISTRIBUTE.-- Each recipient of a telecommunication device shall meet the following criteria:

(1) Be a resident of this Commonwealth.

(2) Qualify as a person with a disability.

(3) Have telephone service, possess the ability to learn how to use a telecommunication device.

(4) Be six years of age or older.

(5) Have a gross income of less than 200% of the Federal poverty level as determined in accordance with the Link Up America guidelines.

HISTORY: Act 1995-34 (H.B. 961), § 3, approved July 6, 1995, eff. immediately; Act 2004-174 (S.B. 79), § 3, approved Nov. 29, 2004, eff. in 60 days.

1 of 1 DOCUMENT

PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES, ANNOTATED BY LEXISNEXIS(R)

THIS DOCUMENT IS CURRENT THROUGH ACT 41 OF THE 2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

*** AUGUST 29, 2007 ANNOTATION SERVICE ***

PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES
TITLE 35. HEALTH AND SAFETY
CHAPTER 35A. UNIVERSAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PRINT MEDIA ACCESS
ACT

Go to the Pennsylvania Code Archive Directory

35 P.S. § 6701.3a (2007)

§ 6701.3a. Establishment of a Print Media Access System Program

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**-- The Print Media Access System Program is hereby established. It shall be a program whereby telephone access to print media access systems for persons who are blind is provided to the user.

(b) **ADMINISTRATION.**-- The executive director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the department, in cooperation with other State agencies which serve people with disabilities, shall oversee implementation of the Print Media Access System Program. To this end, the executive director may do any of the following:

- (1) Establish criteria of eligibility and adopt regulations and forms consistent with the act of July 31, 1968 (P.L. 769, No. 240), referred to as the Commonwealth Documents Law.
- (2) Facilitate the enrollment and training of Print Media Access System Program user.
- (3) Coordinate with newspapers to facilitate the inclusion of additional newspapers and the maintenance of existing newspapers.

(4) Determine, in cooperation with other State agencies, the funds required for the maintenance of the Print Media Access System Program and provide information.

(5) Identify and seek grant funding for the use of the Print Media Access System Program.

(6) Determine what fees, if any, should be charged for the use of the Print Media Access System Program.

(7) Establish criteria for selection and/or change of the Print Media Access System Program service provider.

HISTORY: Act 2004-174 (S.B. 79), § 4, approved Nov. 29, 2004, eff. in 60 days.

1 of 1 DOCUMENT

PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES, ANNOTATED BY LEXISNEXIS(R)

THIS DOCUMENT IS CURRENT THROUGH ACT 41 OF THE 2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

*** AUGUST 29, 2007 ANNOTATION SERVICE ***

PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES
TITLE 35. HEALTH AND SAFETY
CHAPTER 35A. UNIVERSAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PRINT MEDIA ACCESS
ACT

Go to the Pennsylvania Code Archive Directory

35 P.S. § 6701.4 (2007)

§ 6701.4. Establishment of dual party relay service

(a) TELECOMMUNICATION RELAY SERVICES.-- The commission shall design and implement a telecommunication relay service program for the Commonwealth that is consistent with and meets or exceeds the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336, 104 Stat. 327).

(b) CERTIFICATION.-- The commission is authorized to seek on behalf of this Commonwealth certification of the telecommunication relay service program from the Federal Communications Commission.

(c) ADDITIONAL USE OF SURCHARGE.-- The Telecommunication Device Distribution Program shall be funded and the Print Media Access System Program may be funded by the Telecommunication Relay Service Program surcharge, as calculated by the commission on an annual basis under the methodology established by the commission in order entered May 29, 1990, and July 9, 1990, at Docket Number M-00900239, and as subsequently modified by the

commission. The executive director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in the department shall provide the commission with an annual budget and supporting information for the purchase of telecommunication devices for the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program. The executive director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the department shall provide the commission with an annual budget and supporting information for the Print Media Access System Program. A portion of the surcharge may be used to fund the Print Media Access System Program. The surcharge shall not be used to fund administrative costs of the Telecommunication Relay Service Program, Telecommunication Device Distribution Program or the Print Media Access System Program.

(d) LIMITS ON EXPENDITURES.-- Expenditures for the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program shall not exceed collections from the Telecommunication Relay Service Program surcharge allocated for the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program. Any expenditures authorized for the Print Media Access System Program shall not exceed collections from the Telecommunication Relay Service Program surcharge allocated for the Print Media Access System Program and any grant funding received for the use of the Print Media Access System Program.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.-- The commission shall prepare and submit an annual report to the General Assembly on the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program and on the Print Media Access System Program.

(1) The report shall include the fiscal status of the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program and of the Print Media Access System Program, a statement of the surcharge level established under subsection (c) and the revenues produced by the surcharge for allocation to the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program and to the Print Media Access System Program, an account of Telecommunication Device Distribution Program and the Print Media Access System Program expenses and the fund balance.

(2) The executive director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in the department shall provide the commission with information on the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program, including the purchase and distribution of telecommunication devices, for inclusion in the annual report to the General Assembly.

(2.1) The executive director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the department shall provide the commission with information on the Print Media Access System Program, including the annual budget and administration of the Print Media Access System Program, for inclusion in the annual report to the General Assembly.

(3) If the commission determines any of the information is proprietary, the information shall be filed under seal and made available under the terms of an appropriate protective agreement of the type used in cases before the commission.

HISTORY: Act 1995-34 (H.B. 961), § 4, approved July 6, 1995, eff. immediately; Act 2004-174 (S.B. 79), § 5, approved Nov. 29, 2004, eff. in 60 days.

Appendix

No. 3.4

Creation of PA CTRS

Appendix

No. 3.4.1

Trial



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 3265, HARRISBURG, PA 17105-3265

FCC Docket No. CG 03-123

Application for Recertification of the Pennsylvania TRS

November 9, 2007

Page 84

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO OUR FILE

February 6, 2003

M-00900239

MEMBERS OF THE TRS ADVISORY BOARD

Re: Ultratec® CapTel Technology Trial

Dear TRS Advisory Board Member;

On January 16, 2003, the Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board ("TRS Board") adopted a motion to request that the Commission permit Ultratec®, to conduct a 9-month trial (with the possibility of two 3-month extensions) of its CapTel telephone to 200 Pennsylvania pilot participants beginning in May 2003.

CapTel is a form of relay service that uses a voice recognition mechanism and a captioning telephone to display the user's conversation almost simultaneously with their spoken words to the called party. It is designed to be used by individuals who experience some degree of hearing loss who can speak. CapTel provides the users with a degree of functional equivalency that is the closest to a traditional telephone that the industry has offered to date. The equipment will be provided free of charge to 200 trial participants, and a cost of \$1.32 per minute of use for providing the service will be funded by the TRS surcharge.

The Commission approves the TRS Board's motion and recommends that the CapTel trial start in May 2003.

Please direct any questions to Eric Van Jeschke, Telecommunications Group, Bureau of Fixed Utility Services, at (717) 783-3850.

Sincerely,

James J. McNulty
Secretary

cc: Mike Nolan, AT&T
Barbara Dreyfus, Ultratec

Appendix

No. 3.4.2

Trial Extension



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 3265, HARRISBURG, PA 17105-3265

January 30, 2004

FCC Docket No. CG 03-123
Application for Recertification of the Pennsylvania TRS
November 9, 2007
Page 86

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO OUR FILE

RECEIVED

MEMBERS OF THE TRS ADVISORY BOARD

04 FEB -2 AM 11:05 M-00900239

Re: Extension of Ultratec® CapTel Technology Trial BUREAU OF
FIXED UTILITY SERVICES

Dear TRS Advisory Board Member;

On February 6, 2003, the Commission approved the recommendation of the Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board ("TRS Board") permitting Ultratec® to conduct a 9-month trial (with the possibility of two 3-month extensions) of the CapTel telephone relay technology. The initial 9-month trial will end on January 31, 2004.

CapTel is a form of relay service that uses a voice recognition mechanism and a captioning telephone to display the user's conversation almost simultaneously with their spoken words to the called party. It is designed to be used by individuals who experience some degree of hearing loss who can speak. CapTel provides the users with a degree of functional equivalency that is the closest to a traditional telephone that the industry has offered to date. During the trial, the equipment is provided free of charge to the trial participants, and the cost of \$1.32 per minute of use for providing the service is funded by the TRS surcharge.

On December 4, 2003, the TRS Board adopted a motion to request that the Commission permit Ultratec®, to extend the trial of its CapTel telephone for an additional 6-month period (two 3-month extensions) until July 31, 2004. The feedback on the use of the CapTel telephone provided by the trialists has been positive. Therefore, the TRS Board felt it was prudent to request the extension of the trial for both of the 3-month extensions at one time, thus eliminating the need to request the second extension later in 2004.

On January 29, 2004, the Commission unanimously adopted the Motion of Commissioner Glen R. Thomas. The Motion found it more prudent to extend the CapTel Trial for three months to April 30, 2004, and allowed for the possibility of a second three month extension by request of the TRS Board.

Please direct any questions to Eric Van Jeschke, Telecommunications Group, Bureau of Fixed Utility Services, at (717) 783-3850.

Sincerely,

James J. McNulty
Secretary

cc: Sue Decker, AT&T
Barbara Dreyfus, Ultratec

Appendix

No. 3.4.3

PA PUC Order to Include CTRS in PA TRS

**PENNSYLVANIA
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Harrisburg, PA. 17105-3265**

Public Meeting held November 18, 2004

Commissioners Present:

Wendell F. Holland, Chairman
Robert K. Bloom, Vice Chairman
Glen R. Thomas
Kim Pizzingrilli, Statement attached

Pennsylvania Telephone Relay Service –
Captioned Telephone VCO Relay Service

Docket Number
M-00900239F0008

OPINION & ORDER

BY THE COMMISSION:

Before the Commission for consideration is the future of captioned telephone voice carry over (VCO) relay service in Pennsylvania. Captioned telephone service is a form of telephone VCO relay service that uses a voice recognition mechanism and a captioning telephone to display a party's conversation almost simultaneously with the spoken words. The Commission is in the concluding stages of a trial of captioned telephone VCO relay service (CTVRS). Many legal, technical and financial issues have been carefully examined with respect to the long-term provisioning of CTVRS.

In other states, the current providers for full service captioned telephone VCO relay are AT&T, Sprint and Hamilton Telecommunications. These entities subcontract with Ultratec®, the manufacturer (or provider) of the captioned telephones. Ultratec®, in partnership with AT&T as Pennsylvania's certificated Telephone Relay Service (TRS)⁴ provider, has been providing its form of captioned telephone VCO relay service known as CapTel™ on a trial basis to 200 Pennsylvania consumers since May 2003. During the trial period, telephones are

⁴ The Pennsylvania TRS is a telephone relay service provided by AT&T and regulated by this Commission offering persons who are hearing, deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-disabled ways to connect using the telephone: Traditional Relay, Video Relay, and Internet Relay. Each conversation is relayed by a trained Communications Assistant who follows a strict code of ethics and confidentiality. The TRS is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information, see <http://www.parelay.net/>.

“loaned” to the user for the duration of the trial. For the trial, the TRS fund is changed to \$1.32 per session minute for the CapTel™ trial. CapTel™ is currently FCC compliant for full service as

stated in the *FCC Declaratory Ruling Adopted July 25, 2003 Released August 1, 2003 at CC*
Docket No. 98-67 (FCC Ruling).

Initially the Commission approved a nine-month trial of CapTel™ that was subsequently extended by various Commission Orders until July 31, 2004. By Opinion & Order entered June 29, 2004 (June 2004 Order), the Commission launched a fact finding investigation into the continuation of the CapTel™ relay service in Pennsylvania on a going-forward basis and an evaluation as to whether the trial should be extended during the investigation period. The Commission issued a Secretarial letter, July 23, 2004, extending the CapTel™ trial until January 31, 2005, to permit sufficient time for evaluation of the investigation results.

The Commission desired to ensure that the possible long-term provisioning of CTVRS proceeds in a timely manner with minimal disruption. The June 2004 Order, which was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, [34 Pa.B. 3654, July 9, 2004] and posted on the Commission's website, solicited comments on thirteen questions on the feasibility of providing CTVRS in Pennsylvania on an ongoing basis. Comments were due in twenty days and reply comments were due ten days thereafter. This timeframe was designed to give interested parties an opportunity to be heard and the Commission time to decide the best course of action regarding the long-term viability of CTVRS in Pennsylvania.

On July 20, 2004, the Commission received a response to the thirteen questions from the Department of Labor & Industry, Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and on July 29, 2004 received a response from Sprint. The responses are posted on the PUC web page <http://www.puc.state.pa.us>. Thirty-one (31) additional individual responses referenced the June 2004 Order and reinforced the need for CTVRS since it is the closest available technology that provides functional equivalency for certain relay users (i.e. those individuals who can speak and have some degree of hearing). The individual responses are posted to the Commissions web page at <http://www.puc.state.pa.us>.

Having determined that CTVRS should be available in Pennsylvania, the Commission must determine which service provider should implement CTVRS in Pennsylvania on a going-forward basis. On August 20, 2004, Hamilton Relay, a Division of Hamilton Telecommunications, informed the Commission of its interest in providing captioned telephone VCO relay service in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. On October 1, 2004, Sprint Relay submitted a proposal to provide CTVRS in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The current rate paid by the Pennsylvania TRS fund to Ultratec® for intrastate session minutes is \$1.32.⁶ Hamilton Relay states that it will provide CapTel™ at the rate of \$1.45 per minute based on conversation minutes.⁷ Sprint states that the CTVRS will cost \$1.40 per session minute. We invite both these service providers to submit proposals for CTVRS in conjunction with an application to be certified as a CTVRS provider in Pennsylvania.

Traditional TRS in Pennsylvania is on the decline. The Commission believes that some of the historical relay traffic is picked up by internet e-mail, video relay, internet relay and wireless paging to name a few. Likewise, CTVRS is another form of telecommunications relay

⁵ Captioned telephone VCO relay service is offered in: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Federal CapTel, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Kentucky, Maine, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

⁶ The generally accepted explanation of session minutes is that the moment a relay caller connects to the first switch point of the relay service provider; the clock starts until the time the call is disconnected from both the relay agent and the last relay user. This includes start-up, relay call conversation and wrap-up.

⁷ The generally accepted explanation of conversation minutes is that the clock starts when the conversation starts between caller and called party. Not all states describe the conversation minutes the same way. Some would start the moment the third party connects to relay service as opposed to starting at the point of conversation itself. The difference between the two is a few seconds and for some states these seconds are important because they can accumulate.

service that may pick up some of the traditional relay traffic but it is also likely that a new clientele will be born into this technology since it is specific to individuals who are hard of hearing and can speak.

The 2004-2005 budget for all relay service was established May 2004 and did not factor in the costs of a certificate CTVRS program. Because the volume of CTVRS traffic is unpredictable, we shall require the provider of CTVRS to timely submit a monthly report to the Commission on participant status, CA statistics, evaluation results, user comments and volume usage. We anticipate that the 2005-2006 budget will be based on historical and anticipated CTVRS usage.

The Commission has conducted extensive research into the captioned telephone VCO relay service in Pennsylvania, FCC and other states. The Commission has found the issue of providing captioned telephone VCO relay service is a valuable service that should be added as an addition to the traditional telecommunications relay service in Pennsylvania and is found to be in the public interest; **THEREFORE,**

IT IS ORDERED:

1. That captioned telephone voice-carry-over relay service is added to the services of telecommunications relay service in Pennsylvania.
2. That the funding mechanism for the captioned telephone voice-carry-over relay service intrastate minutes will be through the Pennsylvania telecommunications relay service surcharge.
3. That parties interested in providing captioned telephone voice-carry-over relay service effective February 1, 2005 shall complete an Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity as soon as possible so that seamless service may be maintained. Thereafter, the Commission will continue to accept applications to provide captioned telephone voice-carry-over relay service.

4. That the applicant(s) acquire and provide to the Commission the proper certifications from the Federal Communications Commission to provide captioned telecommunications voice-carry-over relay service in Pennsylvania.

5. That the Commission's Bureau of Fixed Utility Services with the assistance of the Law Bureau review the applications and tariffs to provide captioned telephone voice-carry-over relay service in Pennsylvania in a timely manner so that service can be implemented as of February 1, 2005.

6. That the telephone equipment necessary to provide voice-carry-over relay service be provided to individuals who qualify under the Telephone Device Distribution Program, 35 P.S. § 670.1 et. seq.

7. That the original 200 trialists will be offered the opportunity to maintain captioned telephone voice-carry-over relay service as of February 1, 2005, and starting with each consecutive month, an additional 25 users may be added to the program. If any month after February 1, 2005, does not have a full 25 applicants, the number of applicants for that month will be added to the service with no carry-overs of vacancies to the following month (no month can exceed 25 additional users). Applicants in excess of 25 will be carried over to the next months in the sequence in which they apply. This limitation will be subject to evaluation upon establishment of the 2005-2006 TRS budget.

8. That copies of this Order shall be served on each member of the TRS Advisory Board (list attached), the Office of Consumer Advocate, the Office of Small Business Advocate, the Pennsylvania Telephone Association, and Ultratec®.

9. That a copy of this Order be posted on the Commission's web site with a link to access the order from the telecommunications relay service area of the web site.

BY THE COMMISSION,


James J. McNulty

Secretary

(SEAL)

ORDER ADOPTED: November 18, 2004

ORDER ENTERED: November 18, 2004

Appendix

No. 3.4.4

Interim Service

November 9, 2007

IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO OUR FILE

M-00900239
F0008



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 3265, HARRISBURG, PA 17105-3265

May 25, 2005

Re: Announcement of Interim Service of Captioned Telephone Service

TO ALL PENNSYLVANIA CAPTEL TRIALISTS:

The Secretarial Letter of May 12, 2005, at this docket announcing the end of the captioned telephone voice relay service (CTVRS) trial in Pennsylvania is hereby modified. The Commission and the trial service provider⁸ have reached an agreement to cover interim service while the Commission continues the process to implement ongoing captioned telephone service in the Commonwealth. The decision to provide interim service was made based on new information resulting from negotiations with the current provider of the trial service, as well as input received from the Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board, the Commission's Consumer Advisory Council, public officials, and current trialists of captioned telephone service in Pennsylvania.

Existing trialists will not experience a break or change in service⁹ and will have the option of upgrading to 2-line service;¹⁰ trial equipment in their possession will continue to be on loan from Ultratec®. The interim service will open to new users within approximately 60 days or when the terms and equipment fees for the new users are finalized. During the period of interim service, the Commission will continue to work expeditiously toward having regular (non-trial) captioned telephone service in place and accessible in the Commonwealth. However, there is no guarantee that equipment purchased during interim service will be compatible with captioned telephone service after a regular service provider is selected.

⁸ Ultratec® Inc. provided the trial service, using CapTel™ technology-based telephone relay service, which uses a voice recognition mechanism in conjunction with a call center and captioning telephones to display conversations almost simultaneously with the spoken words. The service is designed for use by individuals who can speak but experience some degree of hearing loss. CapTel Inc. (CTI) operates the call center located in Madison, Wisconsin. Weitbrecht Communications Inc (WCI) is the exclusive distributor of the CapTel™ captioning telephones. Ultratec will provide the interim service.

⁹ Effective June 1, 2005, current trialists will be prompted by their equipment to download a free upgrade that will provide additional 911 and 711 features, speed dialing capabilities, captioning of external voice answering machine messages, and Spanish-to-Spanish call set up, if applicable. The sets will continue to operate as they have if one elects not to complete the upgrade process. The update process takes approximately five minutes during which time one cannot use the CapTel set. For more information, check the Commission's website http://www.puc.state.pa.us/telecom/telecom_relay_service.aspx.

¹⁰ Current trialists who wish to upgrade to the optional 2-line service will need to contact both CapTel customer service for the 2-line upgrade and their local exchange carriers to arrange for a second local line.

As part of its responsibility to protect the public interest, the Commission will work to ensure that captioned telephone service is consistent with the obligations inherent in the provision of public utility service. Further, the Commission will continue to monitor advancements in technology to ensure Pennsylvanians who are deaf, hard of hearing, and speech disabled have access to the latest technology.

For technical questions, please contact CapTel customer service at 888-269-7477 (Voice/CapTel), 800-482-2424 (TTY), or service@captelmail.com. Hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Central Time. For equipment purchases, please contact Weitbrecht Communications at 800-233-9130 or www.weitbrecht.com.

Please direct other queries to Tom Charles, the Commission's Manager of Communications, 717-787-9504, thcharles@state.pa.us.

Sincerely,

/s/
James J. McNulty,
Secretary

cc: Chairman Holland
Vice Chairman Bloom
Commissioner Pizzigrilli
Robert Rosenthal, BFUS
June Perry, Legislative Affairs
Thomas Charles, Communications
Frank Wilmarth, Law Bureau
Carol Taylor, Business Mgr., HGAC
Robert Robinson, Program Coordinator, HGAC
TRS Advisory Board
Consumer Advisory Council
Office of Consumer Advocate
Office of Small Business Advocate

Appendix

No. 3.4.5

RFP Cover Letter



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 3265, HARRISBURG, PA 17105-3265

July 29, 2006

**RE: Captioned Telephone Voice-Carry-Over Service (CTVRS)
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

To: CTVRS RFP Recipients

Enclosed is a Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission), Bureau of Fixed Utility Services (FUS), for captioned telephone voice-carry-over relay service (CTVRS). Through this RFP, the Commission is seeking technology to enable individuals who are hard-of-hearing and speech-enabled to communicate, within and to and from Pennsylvania, by telephone with other individuals and businesses by access to telecommunications service that is functionally equivalent to regular telephone service. The nature of the captioning is up to the prospective contractor so long as the requisite speed, accuracy, and reliability of the captioning requirements are met or exceeded.

Questions concerning the RFP must be submitted via email to Robert A. Rosenthal, Director, FUS, at rosenthal@state.pa.us. All questions submitted by noon on August 18, 2006, will be responded to in writing at the pre-proposal conference. The pre-proposal conference is scheduled for August 22, 2006, at 2:00 p.m., in Hearing Room 5 in the Commonwealth Keystone Building in Harrisburg, PA. The Commonwealth Keystone Building, 400 North St., is located on the southwest corner of Forster and Commonwealth Avenues. Attendance at the pre-proposal conference by prospective contractors is optional. Please RSVP by email your intention to attend or not attend the pre-proposal conference. Requests for meeting room accommodations and/or access to a conference bridge should be emailed to Director Rosenthal at least 48 hours prior to the pre-proposal conference.

Responses to this RFP must be complete and consistent with the instructions set forth in the RFP. Responses to this RFP are due in hand at the FUS offices, 3rd Floor West, Commonwealth Keystone Building in Harrisburg, by 1:30 p.m. on September 11, 2006. The mail-box rule is NOT APPLICABLE. Responses will be filed at Folder 13 of the M-00900239 Telephone Relay Service docket.

CTVRS RFP
July 29, 2006
Page 2

Thank you for your interest in CTVRS. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss this request.

Sincerely,

Tom Charles
CTVRS Committee Chair

cc. TRS Advisory Board
PTA
PA PUC Website
DGS Website
William Gannon, Exec. Dir., OVR, L&I
CapTel, Inc.
Chuck Hafferman, AT & T Relay

Appendix

No. 3.4.6

PA PUC Action Accepting Hamilton as Contract CTRS Service Provider